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VINDICATION

Of the Right Honourable

Lord George Sackville.

Humbly inscribed to his Grace

The Duke of DORSET.

*Ille qui primus maledicit altè
Creditur, sed dum venit in Theatrum
Qui reus fertur, subitā querelæ
Nute vaporant.
Clarior splendet Tenebris fugatis
Sol, in Occasum nebulis remotis,
Luce scintillant rubicundiore
Sidera Cæli.*

A. H. A. M.

L O N D O N:

Printed for A. Henderson in Westminster-Hall.
Price 6 d.

1609/6027

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VINDICATION OF Lord George Sackville.

W HEN the Voice of the Publick is raised against an Officer of Birth and Family, it is the Duty of every Well-wisher of his King and Country to rectify such Mistakes as may in the Issue be attended with Consequences not only fatal to the innocent Object of the Peoples Hatred and Resentment, but even entail upon the Kingdom in general a Character which it will be the Work of Time to eraze and obliterate. And tho' every Officer honoured with the King's Commission has an equal Title to the Patronage of the Learned, yet when Birth is joined to Station, and personal Accomplishments, the Obligation becomes

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still stronger for cooling the Fury of Resentment, and stemming the Torrent of Revenge, by a fair and candid Representation of Actions which through the false Eyes of Detraction appear hideous and terrible.

On this Consideration the Author of the following Narrative has undertaken the Vindication of the Right Honourable Lord *George Sackville*, who at the late Battle near *Minden* had the Command of the Right Wing of the Cavalry, and now stands condemned without a Hearing in the Opinion of the Populace.

To represent the Actions of the Most Illustrious and Noble Family of *DORSET*, would not be to the Purpose, as no Words can add Lustre to them : 'Tis not with the Family of *Dorset* we have to do, but with Lord *George Sackville* *. Every Man must stand or fall by his own Merit; Relationship is but a favourable Introduction to Acquaintance, but a Man's Behaviour must be the Pillar of his Preferment, and by himself he is to rise or fall. And in this Light shall I consider the Matter, and proceed in order.

With all the Advantages of Birth, both on the Father and Mother's Side, did this injured Commander make his Appearance in the World ; his Education was ample, and his

* *Nam genus & Proavos & quæ non facimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco.*

his Disposition for Letters being generous and free, he made a considerable Progress in the several Branches of useful and polite Literature, and his Genius being turned to War, he soon entered his Majesty's Service, and at the very first Battle wherein he was engaged his personal Bravery was admired not only by the Officers of the Army where he served, but by his very Enemies.

He behaved in the last War with all imaginable Honour and Fidelity; he was Lieutenant-Colonel in General ~~Bland~~^{Bray}'s Regiment at the Battle of *Fontenoy*, where he acted in every Respect suitable to the Nobleman and Soldier; he was at the Battles of *Culloden* and of *Lavelt*, still behaving with unblemish'd Conduct: As he did during the Expeditions to the Coast of *France* under the late Duke of *Marlborough*; and while he had the sole Command in the *Isle of Wight*, 'till the Arrival of his Grace, no Man was more exact in his Discipline, more regarded by the Officers, and better beloved by the private Men.

If then the Generosity of his Birth, the Greatness of his Family, the Fulness of his Education, the Extent of his Experience, and the uniform Tenure of his Practice be considered, it is highly improbable that Lord *George* would all of a sudden break through the strong Obligations of Duty, Interest, and Inclination to serve his Country on the first of

August, at the Battle of *Thornhausen*; which leads me to consider his Conduct in that Action, as being the Part so loudly complained of: And the better to understand this, we shall take a particular View of the Ground whereon this memorable Engagement happened.

The allied Army under Prince *Ferdinand* was drawn up on a Plain two Miles to the South of *Minden*, and on the South Side of a Winding of the *Wefer*, the River which divides *Westphalia* from *Hanover*, and having a Village named *Hille* in Front of them; about a Mile from the Right and Left of the Army, and between their Lines and the *Wefer* lay two Morasses, distant from each other about three Quarters of a Mile: These Morasses run parallel with the River; that to the East extended Eastward six Quarters of a Mile, and that to the West was but one Third of it: Between this last Morass and the *Wefer* was General *Wangenheim* entrenched with 20000 Men.

The French Army consisting of 80,000 Men, was drawn up on both Sides of the *Wefer*, and had the Command of the City of *Minden*, over which was a Stone Bridge, which joins the Old and New Town: Marshal *Centades* was posted with his Division, next to the great Morass, but stretched near half a Mile beyond it. And on the North Side lay the Duke of *Broglio*; between

between whom and Marshal *Contades* Aid de Camps were riding incessantly. The Duke thought proper in this Situation to pass the Bridge at *Minden*, and with an extended Front to march up to attack M. *Wangenheim*'s Entrenchments with a numerous Artillery. The Cannonading began at Four in the Morning, and continued brisk till Seven; when it was agreed between the two *French* Commanders to give over the Attempt, and wheel about to face Prince *Ferdinand*, now in full March to attack them in Flank, and to succour *Wangenheim*. The great Dispute was who should have the Advantage of the Ground, for whichever of the Armies could be attacked between the two Morasses where Room was wanting to extend the Lines, must certainly be undone: And the Duke of *Broglio* too hastily wheeling to the Left, crossed the Pass and brought on the Battle on the South Side of it.

The allied Army consisting of 70,000 Men was extended from East to West in nine Columns; that in the Center was by far the longest and deepest; and it happened to be the Fate of Lord *George* to be stationed on the Right with Twenty-four Squadrons of Horse, some of them the finest Regiments in *Europe*.

As the *French* possessed a Village on the South of the Morass where was planted a Battery of twelve Pieces of Cannon, Prince *Ferdinand* wisely stationed Lord *George* a little behind

behind the Line, but to the Right of it, in order to have the more extensive View of the Columns, and to succour the Allies in whatever Part they might give Way: By the Time they were formed it was seven o'Clock in the Morning and the general Engagement begun between the Left of the Allies, composed of the *British* Foot, and the Right of the *French* commanded by *Broglio* in Person: Happily for the former, they were opposite to the Horse of the latter, and these were straitened for Room. With all the Ardour of the ancient *Gauls*, heated by a Desire of preserving the Reputation bestowed all over *Europe* upon the *Gens d'Armes* of *France*, did these come on Sword in Hand upon the *British* Infantry; who, as directed, did not fire till they were so near that the Colour of the Eyes of the Enemy could be discovered: Those that came opposite to General *Kingsley's* Corps, were almost at the Muzzle of the Guns of the Soldiers before they gave their Fire, which was so *propos*, that the Men and Horses tumbled over each other, and a dreadful Carnage ensued; the *British* Troops were even obliged to fall back a little, not so much by the Pressure of the Enemy, as to give Room for their own Artillery to play upon the thickest Squadrons of the Enemy, who being driven out of the Field with prodigious Slaughter, retired behind their own Body of Reserve, while their Infantry advanced

vanced to supply their Station ; and tho' they received Volleys upon Volleys from the Cannon and Musquetry of the Allies, yet they pressed forward, and from their Artillery and small Arms answered the Fire directed against them.

In this general way, not to descend into little Incidents, did Things continue till about Eleven o'Clock, when the *French* sounded a Retreat towards *Minden*, whether the Body of the Allies could not pursue them with the same Spirit as they had continued the Engagement, least they should in their Turn be embarrassed in the same narrow Pass between the Morasses, which had turned out so fatal to the Enemy.

If such was the Position of both Armies, I should be extreamly glad to know what other Part the most sanguine Censurers of Lord *George Sackville*'s Conduct would have had him to act than what he did : Would they have had him attack the Battery of twelve Pieces of Cannon, which the *French* had erected on the South Side of the Morass, and expose the most illustrious Regiments in *Europe* as a Mark to shoot at, without Possibility of having their Revenge ? For Cavalry were never intended to take Forts and Batteries ; Or would they have had his Lordship to have turned to the Right to fetch a Compass about the large Morass, and attack the Enemy in Flank ? The Illustrious Commander

mander in Chief knew the *French* too well to break the Order of Battle which was so favourable for him; and had recently seen how unequal a Body of the best appointed Cavalry was to veteran foot Regiments; add to this that the Ground over which they were to pass was marshy, and they must pass two small Rivulets, and a large one very deep and stony before they could come up to the Ground occupied by Marshal *de Contades* before the Engagement. Or would they have had his Lordship to move from the Right at an hard Trott, and put them to the Trouble of opening from Right to Left to let them pass thro' and attack the flying Enemy, who was now exposed to all the Fury of the Artillery? Had Lord *George* taken so false a Step, the Fire of the Allies must have ceased from the Moment that the Horse got between them and the Enemy. Nay farther; a regular Platoon from some of the *French* Infantry, might have sent the Cavalry of the Allies back upon their own Foot Regiments with a Vengeance, and have gone near to snatch Victory out of their Hands. For my own Share, I own I cannot see, considering the Nature of the Ground, and the Situation of Affairs at that Engagement, how Lord *George* could have acted a better Part than he has done: Nor is it at all improbable but a Detachment from the Enemy would have attacked the Allies in Flank on the Right, had

had they not been awed by the Reputation and menacing Aspect of the different Regiments under his Lordship's Command.

The *Inniskilling Dragoons*, so famous thro' *Britain* and *Ireland*, and upon the Continent, from the Battle of the *Boyne* to this very Day, have had an Emulation to retain the high Character bestowed upon them by the Duke of *Scomberg*, who, observing the noble Spirit by which they were actuated, and the Courage and Alacrity where with they conquered almost insurmountable Difficulties, recommended them to that consummate General in the Art of War King *William the IIId.* by whom they were formed into a Regiment, and denominated from the Place where the first of them were raised: The Immortal Deliverer of *England* and *Holland*, and what is more, of the Protestant Religion, soon reaped the Fruits of their Services at the Battles of *Boyne* and *Agrim*; and their Behaviour remains untainted. They were always commanded by able Generals, Men of Birth, and what is more, Men of Courage and Integrity. Among these were the undaunted General *Rys*, the cool and intrepid Earl of *Stair*; and more late than these, the sagacious General *Cholmondy*. Is it to be supposed, that a Regiment of such an undoubted Reputation, would have sacrificed all their former Laurels, and have remained

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unactive, had they seen a Way for them to be employed, but especially if they had received Orders to advance from the Generalissimo? Had this been the Case, it is not to be supposed, that either the Example or Authority of Lord *George Sackville* could have restrained them. The same Thing may be said for the Regiment of Royal Scotch *Greys*: A Corps who ever since the Time of their being raised, *Anno 1666*, have preserved a Reputation which hardly can receive an additional Lustre.

The Regiment of *Greys* have been always commanded by Officers great by Birth, and famous by their Actions; nor ever were they charged with remaining idle Spectators of a Battle till the first of *August, 1759*.

At the Battle of *Malplaquet*, they rode thro' the thickest Ranks of the Enemy, in spight of the Fire of the whole first Line of the *French Army*. At *Sherifmuir* they put to flight whole Squadions of their Opponents. At *Dettingen* they broke the *Gens d' Armes of France*: And at the Battle of *Leveld* they not only cut Marshal *Tallard's* Regiment of Horse in pieces, and put two other Regiments to Flight, but likewise contributed much to secure the Retreat of the Allied Army. The Officers at this Time were trained up under the Earl of *Crawford*; a Nobleman, who, out of Thirst after Military Glory, and in Quest of Knowledge in

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the Art of War, served as a Volunteer in the best appointed Armies in *Europe*, and now they are commanded by a Gentleman of distinguished Merit, and endowed with every Virtue, possessing the most refined Politeness, the most engaging Behaviour; and, what is more than all, he is a brave and an honest Man.

If the Accusers of Lord George Sackville suspect that he acted out of national Resentment toward the People of *Ireland* on account of some publick Disputes or private Quarrels, which happened while the Duke of *Dorset* was Lord Lieutenant in that Kingdom, I shall only say, that Lord *George* possesses too good Sense to act in such a Manner, when called upon to serve his Country. And since his most sanguine Enemies cannot refuse him to be a Man of Abilities, so I would not have any Person raise the remotest Suspicion of so absurd and unaccountable a Conduct. The same may be said of the Regiment of *Greys*, many of whose Officers dwell in the Neighbourhood of *Sevenoaks* in *Kent*, near the Duke of *Dorset*'s Seat, and live in the greatest Harmony with all his Grace's Family.

Malice itself cannot charge Lord George with bearing any Ill-will toward the *English* Regiments; nor even to those of *Hannover*, whose Reputation has hitherto been sup-

ported: His Lordship could not possibly entertain any Rancour toward them, as they are the national Troops of his own Sovereign, who, by Proxy, stood Godfather to him, and who has conferred so many and such singular Favours on the several Branches of the Family of *Dorset*, as if these had been the sole Objects of all his Affection and Love.

But can any Person be of Opinion, that the *Hannoverian* General who commanded the Cavalry of the Electorate on the Right Wing would have preferred the Orders of Lord *George Sackville* to those of Prince *Ferdinand*? Had an Aid de Camp come from the latter, the whole *Hannoverians* on that Wing would, without Regard to his Lordship, have obeyed the Commands of their Leader, and detached themselves from the Wing under Lord *George*: Both Officers and Men were sensible of the Devastation committed by the *French* for the two preceeding Years in the States of *Hannover*; their Wives and Daughters had been abused by these Sons of Violence, and their young Men had been tampered with to commit the foulest and most detestable Crimes. They were not insensible of the Havock and Desolation intended against their Country for finishing the Cruelties begun by the Duke of *Richlieu*, and interrupted for a Time by the Retreat of the Prince of *Clermont*: Add to all this they were fired with a Zeal to maintain the Character

Character they had acquired. For the *Hanoverian Cavalry* gained immortal Honour at raising the Siege of *Vienna*, *Anno 1683*, being on the Right Wing of the Christian Army, which broke into the *Turkish Lines*, under King *John Sobieski*: At *Oudinarde*, his reigning Majesty King *George* headed them, and had a Horse shot under him. In a Word, the *Hannoverian Regiments* behaved extreamly well in all the Engagements where they were present under the *Duke of Marlborough*; and their Intrepidity and Courage were very conspicuous during the last War.

From all which Considerations its highly probable that neither the *Inniskilling Dragoons*, the *Scots Greys*, nor any Regiment on the *British Establishment*, and far less the *Hannoverian Cavalry*, who in a manner fought *pro aris & focis*, would have been restrained from the Action by Lord *George Sackville*, provided Prince *Ferdinand* had sent them Orders to advance. Sure I am, if they had disobeyed the first, they certainly would not have stood easy at the second Command; either Prince *Ferdinand* by his Order, or they themselves, would have secured him, and put him under an Arrest.

It is well known, that Lord *George Sackville*, during the present Campaign, has always endeavoured to preserve the strictest Discipline among his own Troops, and to promote Harmony and Good-will between them

them and the *Hannoverians*, never ceasing when Occasion requires to inform them that they were engaged in the same Cause, were of the same Religion, and Subjects of the same Sovereign. At the different Councils of War he spoke with Candour, but always generously submitted to the Judgment of Prince *Ferdinand*, as being best acquainted with the Country; and by his well-timed Junction he restored the Affairs of Prince *Ferdinand* after the Battle of *Bergen*. On the Evening before the Battle, Lord *George* gave it as his Opinion, that they ought to wait for the *French* in the Camp of *Petershagen*, but yielded to the Arguments of Prince *Ferdinand* for marching Southward to *Hille*, in order to decoy the Enemy into an Engagement.

During the Time of the Action his Lordship shewed no Signs of Fear, but retained the Countenance of a Soldier, the Bravery of a Warriour, and the Serenity of a General Officer. The whole of his Conduct in the Time of Action was regular and uniform, and by keeping the Station assigned him, he contributed so far to the Victory, as to over-awe the Enemy from crossing the *Warta*, and other Rivulets which run into the large Morafs, in order to attack the Allies in Flank. He could not have given more Assistance than he did considering the Nature of the Ground; and so far was he from disobeying the

the Orders of Prince *Ferdinand* till he received one in Writing, that upon the first Command from the Aid de Camp, he put his Men in Motion to fetch a Compafs round the Morass ; he begun the March in excellent Order, and continued advancing till recalled by Prince *Ferdinand*, who was apprised that the *French* had an Ambush in these Places.

He shewed no Signs of Displeasure after the Action, except for being recalled from the Rout he was taking ; and understanding the Matter, his Uneasiness dropped into Composure. Nor was he averse to a Pursuit, in which as many were occupied as Order, Discipline, and the Nature of the Ground would admit of.

In whatever Light we consider his Conduct, we cannot with any Propriety condemn him for Mutiny, since the Fact of refusing to obey Orders is absolutely denied, and Probability speaks on Behalf of the traduced Nobleman. Neither can we fix upon him the Crime of Disaffection, since he and his Family lay under such great and numerous Obligations to the best and mildest of Kings : Nor can we fix upon him the Charge of Cowardice, he being injur'd to War, and hardened in the Field of Danger ; whose frequent Phrase was

Dulce

*Dulce & decorum est pro patria mori,
 Mors & fugacem persequitur virum,
 Nec parcit imbellis juventae
 Poplitibus timidoque tergo.*

It is scarce possible to suspect him guilty of Corruption, since the Places he enjoyed in *Britain* were equally lucrative as any he could have in the Armies of *France*; and that his Father and the whole Family of *Sackville* was dandled upon the Knees of the Government. But what Pique could exist between Prince *Ferdinand* and him? If any: It was far from being prudent in his Highness to trust a Man who was at Variance with him, and harboured a Pique against him: nor does it add to the Prince's Character to commit Twenty-four Squadrons on the Right Wing of the Army, to an Officer who always opposed his Schemes.

It is true his Highness does not particularly name Lord *George Sackville* in the Catalogue of Officers whom he honoured with his Applause for their Conduct: But what then: Tho' he does not condemn him for Inactivity in attacking or pursuing the Enemy, yet he does not disapprove of the Steps he pursued in keeping his Station with an entire Column ready to break in wherever there should be Occasion. In many Battles besides that of *Thornhausen* the Cavalry stood unactive, as at *Fontenoy*.

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The Defence used by a most innocent Person at the Barr of the *Roman Governor*, is highly applicable to the Case before us: *They cannot prove the Things wherof they accuse me*: And I am fully perswaded that upon an impartial Enquiry Lord *George Sackville* will appear in Colours extreamly agreeable to every *Englishman*: For during the Time of his being joined in Command with Prince *Ferdinand* he maintained the Honour of a *British* General, he assiduously studied the *German* Language, and with an unparrelled Vivacity traversed the different Parts of the Country where Actions had been, or where any were apprehended. No Man supported the Elegance of his Character with a better Decorum; his Table was replenished with wholesome Food, fit for Soldiers to digest; and every Day was surrounded with *British* Officers, and the broken Victuals were distributed among the private Men.

Had the Table of Lord *George Sackville* been equally free to all, as it was to the *Britons*, no Letter in Hieroglyphic Characters from a Noble Duke had appeared against him; nor would his Grace have been made to congratulate his Lordship on the Rule he took to second the most destructive Schemes in Opposition to Mr. *Pitt's* Administration.

No Room would have been left for charging Lord *George* with Disaffecttion, Mutiny, Cowardice and Pique, and tho' the Proofs

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advanced in Support of the Accusation, owed their Strength more to the Ingenuity of the Writer than to the Justice of the Cause he maintained, yet they were sufficient to inflame the Minds of the Populace.

The same Thing may be observed of another elaborate Performance, charging the *British* Commander with Accusations of the same Kind but supported by no better Evidence than Fiction and Clamour.

Had Lord *George Sackville* been an Enemy to the Cause in which he was concerned, he would not have suffered the *British* Infantry to engage without being at their Head; had he been a Coward, he might easily have rode off with the Cavalry under his Command; had he been rash and obstinate, he would have doubled the Morass at any Event, and without any Cause have risqued the Whole, to the Loss of the Victory.

He received from Prince *Ferdinand*'s own Mouth the most positive Orders to keep his Station on the Right, as the most proper Place to stand in; and these he punctually obeyed. It was the same Thing to his Lordship to attack or to pursue, to advance upon the Enemy, or to wait their coming upon him: He was too much of a Soldier not to be sensible that frequently more Men fell in Flight than in the Engagement; and with him the Love of Life never took Place of Intrepidity. Freighted with a Magnanimity only

only peculiar to noble Souls he submitted to the Orders of a Prince who was in the Pay of that Crown whom he immediately served, and whose Lustre his noble Ancestors have so frequently contributed to brighten. It was agreed between the Prince and him that he was not to move from his Station, unless to meet that Corps which M. *Contades* was expected to send down upon him: But when the Rout of the Enemy began, an *Aid de Camp* arrived with Orders for him to advance with one half of the Column; and while the Words were in his Mouth, another came up with an Order to advance with the Whole: *Which of you, Gentlemen, said Lord George, came last from Prince Ferdinand?* Their Answer not being satisfactory, his Lordship clapped Spurs to his Horse, and flying at a full Stretch, he was in five Minutes up with the Prince, who instantly directed him to march the Whole as near the Morass as possible, to prevent the Flight of the Enemy on that Quarter. This being settled, the *British* General galloped back at the same full Speed, and executed the Commands of his Highness, and added to the Tide of Consternation and Horror, which now overwhelmed the Forces of the Enemy. Such of them as were flying off upon the Right stopped short on, seeing the Cavalry under Lord *George*; they fled into the Pâis, where they were overtaken by Volleys of Grape-

Shot from a Battery of Thirty Guns, raised by the Count *de Bukebourg*. Many of them threw themselves into the Morafs and were suffocated ; few reached the other Side ; and Numbers were shot in the Water, while struggling to get through. This Motion of Lord *George* was the Cause of taking so many Prisoners ; for the Vanquished being hemmed in on every Side, laid down their Arms, and in Battalions submitted to the Conquerour. This will appear upon Enquiry.

However dubious the Expression used by his Highness, "That the Victory would have been more compleat and brilliant had the Marquis of *Granby* headed the Cavalry", yet every Man of Humanity will rather construe it to be a Compliment to the Marquis than a Reflection upon the Conduct of Lord *George Sackville*, especially when it is considered, that these two Commanders were on the different Wings of the Army.

It is observable, that since the Use of Fire-Arms less Blood has been shed at a Battle than before these were invented : The Reason is plain ; the Firelocks and Accoutrements of the Soldiers retard their Swiftness to follow, nor is it adviseable to pursue too far after an Enemy, accustomed to the Feints and Stratagems of War, who have given Way. Perhaps there have not been three more compleat

pleat Victories than that at *Minden* since the Invention of Fire-Arms.

In my humble Opinion Prince *Ferdinand* has no Reason to complain of any Defect either in the Brilliancy or Fullness of the Conquest: The *French* Squadrons were almost cut in Pieces, the *Gens de Armes* were in a manner ruined; the best Effects flowed from a Plan, the most wisely concerted, and the most steadily pursued. Every Circumstance concurred to favour the generous Intentions of Men who fought for their All: The *French* were caught in their own Snares, and he who had so frequently extricated himself from insurmountable Difficulties, was enticed, by the superior Address of a young Hero, between two Morasses, where he could not extend his Lines, and where Shrubs and Thickets of Wood hindered him from tracing out the various Dispositions formed against him: The Consequences of the Victory were the most extensive; *Westphalia* and *Hannover* are free; the Langraviate of *Hesse* breaths after the most terrible Convulsions, and the exulting Enemy is driven from the *Weser* to seek Shelter on the *Gallic* Side of the *Rhine*.

Let the Marshal *Contades* send a Memorial to the Court of *France*, complaining of the Duke of *Broglio*, for the Disposition he made and for bringing on a Battle which terminated so fatally for the Glory and Interest of

Lewis

Lewis XV. Let the Duke of *Broglio* answer the Marshal by a Counter-Memorial, charging him as the Cause of the Disaster, for not sending a Body of Troops to attack the right Wing of the Allies in Flank, which nothing but the Situation of Lord *George Sackville* could have prevented ; the *French* are the Losers, and must be allowed to complain ; they are chagrined at their Disappointment, and it is natural that they should give vent to the Pangs of Rage, of Horrour, and of Shame ; in which the Court, the City, the Provinces and Armies of *France* are overwhelmed. On the contrary, the People of *Great Britain* have Cause to rejoice that one Line of their Infantry did by the Confession of their very Enemies break three Lines of the best appointed Cavalry, and that the *French* Troops hitherto given out to be invincible, have been totally routed upon the Plains of *Minden* in *Westphalia*.

F I N I S.



